

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant has carefully studied the outstanding Official Action mailed on September 25, 2006. This response is intended to be fully responsive to all points of rejection raised by the Examiner and is believed to place the application in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-4 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Pappas.

Claim 1 stands rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Downey.

Claims 5-7 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pappas.

Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections. Claim 6 recites structure that is not found at all in Pappas, namely, a tooth (44) for contacting an inner surface of the elastomeric cover, wherein the contact between the tooth and the inner surface of the elastomeric body forms a fluid-tight seal for preventing fluid from seeping between the elastomeric cover and the implant body. The Examiner has not shown where this structure exists in the prior art. Furthermore, the recitation of claim 7 is also not found in the cited art, namely, the tooth protrudes from a groove portion of the tongue-and-groove connection.

Although Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections, for the purposes of expedited allowance, claim 1 has been amended to include the recitation of claim 6 and claim 6 has thus been cancelled. Claims 5 and 7 have been amended to change their dependency. It is respectfully submitted that claims 1-5 and 7 are deemed allowable.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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